



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
March 3, 2010

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North Dakota Department of Health Seeking Volunteers To Help With Possible Flood Response

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is seeking people willing to help respond during possible spring flooding in North Dakota, according to Brenda Vossler, director of the Division of Hospital Preparedness for the North Dakota Department of Health.

The Department of Health needs both medical and nonmedical volunteers who are interested in helping out with the public health flood response, if needed. Anyone interested in volunteering would become part of the Public Health Emergency Volunteer Reserves/Medical Reserve Corps (PHEVFR/MRC), which is a group of both medical and nonmedical volunteers who provide assistance during a public health emergency.

“It’s really important that we have both medical and nonmedical volunteers ready to go in case they are needed,” Vossler said. “One good example is if shelters need to be set up for evacuees, we will need medical volunteers to help with any medical needs people may have, and we will need nonmedical volunteers to help out with things like registration, setting up cots, handing out food, answering phone calls and many other things.”

Anyone interested in volunteering should visit www.ndhealth.gov/EPR/volunteer. After registering, volunteers will be asked to complete a short online training. There will be an orientation training held for anyone interested in volunteering or for anyone who wants to learn more before registering. That training will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, at 7 p.m. CST. Anyone interested can participate by telephone by calling 866.888.3385 or by Internet at www.ndhealth.gov/WebcastHigh.aspx.

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old and live, work or go to school in North Dakota. Anyone deployed as a PHEVR/MRC volunteer will be covered under North Dakota Worker’s Compensation if injured while assisting in an emergency situation.

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

“It’s very important that people interested in volunteering take the time to register on the website,” Vossler said. “Knowing how many volunteers we have and what their special skills and talents are allows us to plan much more efficiently for an emergency. It also ensures that volunteers have received proper training, and that licensure checks for medical volunteers are completed. If all this is complete before an emergency, we can place that volunteer in a position quickly when needed.”

More information about the PHEVR/MRC program can be found by visiting www.ndhan.gov/PHEVR/phevr.asp.

For more information, the media can contact Brenda Vossler, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2270.

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